



National Agenda



Early Years



Special Educational Needs



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

**GEMS New Millennium School L.L.C**

Curriculum: CBSE

Overall rating: Good

[Read more about the school](#)



www.khda.gov.ae

“Don't look behind to see who is following you, but look forward to be ahead”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

## Contents

School information .....	2
Summary for parents and the community .....	3
Main inspection report .....	11
1. Students' achievement .....	12
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills .....	15
3. Teaching and assessment.....	17
4. Curriculum .....	19
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students .....	20
Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).....	21
6. Leadership and management.....	22
The views of the parents, teachers and students .....	25

## School information

### General information



Location	Al Khail Road
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2013
Website	www.gemsnewmillenniumschool-alkhail.com
Telephone	04-4452900;04-3396533
Address	Al Khail Road
Principal	Ms. Fatima Martin
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	14 to 16 December 2015

### Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4 - 14
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 8
Number of students on roll	997
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	2
Number of students with SEND	168
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

### Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	69
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	16
Teacher-student ratio	1:14
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	16%

### Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	Indian
Main curriculum	CBSE
External tests and examinations	CBSE
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	GL/ IBT



## Summary for parents and the community

**GEMS New Millennium School L.L.C** was inspected by DSIB from 14 to 16 December 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key standards of performance. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching and the assessment of learning were across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, met the educational needs of all children. They judged how well the school protected and supported children. In addition inspectors judged the effectiveness of leadership and governance, including management, staffing, facilities and resources.

The inspection judgements were drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents', teachers' and senior students' surveys.



2015 - 2016 Good





## How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **GEMS New Millennium School L.L.C** provides a **good** quality of education for its students:

- Students' attainment and progress across the school was generally good, but only acceptable in Islamic education and Arabic as an additional and first language, and acceptable in science in the primary phase. Children in the kindergarten (KG) made very good progress in English, mathematics and science, giving them a very positive start to their academic and personal development. Students developed good learning skills across the school which contributed to their success in leading their own learning.
- Across all phases, students' personal development and social responsibility, as well as their innovation skills, were very well developed, which contributed significantly to the academic success they achieved in most subjects. They demonstrated an excellent understanding of the value of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) culture during lessons and when engaged in whole school assemblies.
- The quality of teaching across the school was mainly good, but only acceptable in the primary phase because of inconsistencies in the quality of learning in science and Arabic. Teachers made good use of assessment information and practices in order to plan appropriate learning for most students. Assessment was very good in the KG.
- The school curriculum was good in design and in the way in which it was adapted to meet the needs of most students. Of particular note was the bespoke curriculum in the KG which was based on the Foundation Stage framework in England and enhanced with additional learning content. It was designed to support the successful transition of KG 2 children into Grade 1 and the demands of the CBSE curriculum. However, there was a significant gap in the curriculum content in Arabic as a first language as students progressed between the grades. In Grades 4 and 6 the time requirements for teaching Arabic as a first language were not met.
- The health, safety and protection of all students was very good, as was the safeguarding arrangements to ensure students were kept safe and free from harm at all times. The care and support provided to students was good across the school, but not very good because provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was too variable in classes to ensure they were receiving the best support in their learning.
- The inspirational leadership and expertise of the principal, supported by a very capable, experienced and skilled senior leadership team, had contributed to the school making good progress. The senior leaders, supported effectively by governors, were dedicated and ambitious in setting a very demanding vision for the school, and setting a very quick pace in improving the quality of the curriculum, teaching, and in building the capacity of subject leaders and coordinators to be collectively and individually effective in their roles. Improvement had been achieved whilst maintaining very high levels of morale amongst staff and the wider school community.



### What did the school do well?

- Children achieved very good levels of attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science in the KG.
- Students' demonstrated very good personal and social development, and innovation skills.
- The school provided a safe, secure, and attractive environment for all students to learn and to achieve well.
- There was a shared and collective drive, determination and ambition amongst senior leaders and governors, led by the principal, to develop the school further to meet the high expectations it set itself.



### What does the school need to do next?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in students' day-to-day learning across all phases, particularly in science in the primary phase, Arabic as a first and additional language and Islamic education, by:
  - improving the quality of teaching across the school, and especially in the primary phase, so that teaching is consistently of a high quality
  - setting more ambitious targets for what students can achieve in lessons, particularly the most able and those with special educational needs and disabilities
  - ensuring subject leaders and coordinators are more active in the day to day monitoring of the quality of students' outcomes in relation to the quality of teaching and curriculum provision
  - modifying the timetable so lesson time is not wasted by students when they move between lessons.
- Improve the leadership of SEND, particularly the quality and use of individual education plans and associated monitoring and assessments systems, so students with SEND make at least the same good levels of progress as their peers in all lessons.
- Governors must ensure the school is fully compliant in meeting the Ministry of Education requirements for the teaching of Arabic as a first and additional language, and in the timetabling in Grades 4 and 6. In addition, they must ensure students studying for Arabic as a first and additional language are taught separately in order to meet their language learning needs.



### How well did the school provide for students with special educational needs and disabilities?

- The school had effectively established itself as an inclusive setting, which accepted students with a range of SEND. The provision for students with SEND was acceptable. They made acceptable academic progress in lessons and good personal and social development over time.
- Students' progress was regularly reported to parents during informal meetings and more formally through the cycle of issuing written school reports.
- Parents appreciated the opportunity to have regular meetings with the SEND team to discuss the progress of their child, particularly after the regular end-of-unit assessments and reports. They were aware of their child's individual education plan and the provision that had been made available in school.
- Parents were well supported by the SEND team to help improve their own knowledge, skills and understanding, which enabled them to improve support for their child at home.
- Ongoing advice and guidance was offered to parents from the SEND team and guidance counselor. However, no specific parent advice sessions linked to SEND had been available.

## National Agenda Parameter



In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021, with education being a prime focus. The National Agenda includes two major objectives developed with the intent of placing the UAE among the most successful countries that provide world-class education. By 2021, it is expected that the UAE will feature in the top twenty countries in the 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) test and in the top fifteen countries in the 'Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies' (TIMSS) test.

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. This academic year, KHDA introduced the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

### Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available at this stage to make a judgement on the school's progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- School leaders and governors were highly committed to and fully aware of the National Agenda Parameter, including the KHDA requirements for students to achieve higher test results in TIMSS. Parents were aware of the importance of TIMSS targets linked to the IBT and GL benchmarked test results. Through strong leadership, teachers were proactive in modifying their teaching and curriculum in order to prepare students to achieve the targets. Students understood the value of achieving the targets for their success in key subjects.
- There was clear alignment and regular review of the CBSE curriculum in relation to the TIMSS, PISA and externally benchmarked test requirements through emphasising these in lessons. In English, the emphasis was on reading for comprehension and extended writing. In mathematics, teachers were developing students' mental arithmetic skills across all phases and providing more challenging questions so students could make practical applications of mathematics in real life contexts, though this was underdeveloped in the middle phase. In science, there was an increased focus on developing students' investigation, prediction and graphical presentation skills.
- Lesson planning and continuing professional development was focused on teachers' developing their strategies for promoting independent learning and critical thinking among students, so students could take more ownership of their learning and success. In addition, there was a focus on the role of the teacher as facilitator rather than provider of all learning knowledge and content.
- Students' use of a range of learning technologies as a research tool was evident across the phases. Students had access to a range of software including IXL, Gizmos and Reflex to support their research, enquiry and learning skills. Linked to this, students were given regular opportunities to relate their learning to their lives and the world around them in imaginative ways. For example, a weekly 'Genius Hour' provided students with opportunities to explore global issues and to develop innovative solutions.

## Innovation in education

The *UAE Vision 2021* sets out the National Agenda for the UAE to be among the most innovative nations in the world. The National Innovation Strategy sets the context for 'innovation' and 'innovative leadership'. It provides a basis for evaluating public and private schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.



### Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The principal, supported by three senior leaders, had a very clear understanding of the role and importance of promoting a culture of innovation, in line with the UAE vision. Innovation leaders across the school had started to develop a strategy for embedding innovation in the curriculum and through promoting action research and professional development programmes. Students had many opportunities during formal lessons and informally, to begin to explore and develop their innovation learning skills.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		KG	Primary	Middle
<b>Islamic education</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as a first language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Not applicable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>English</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Very good	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Very good	Good	Good
<b>Mathematics</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Very good	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Very good	Good	Good
<b>Science</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Very good	Acceptable	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Very good	Acceptable	Good

	KG	Primary	Middle
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Good	Good

## 2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

	KG	Primary	Middle
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Very good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good	Very good	Very good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Very good

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Good
Assessment	Very good	Good	Good

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good

## 5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students

	KG	Primary	Middle
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good	Very good	Very good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

## 6. Leadership and management

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good



## Main inspection report

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

### Judgements are made on a six-point scale



Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

## 1. Students' achievement

### KG

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good
Science	Very good	Very good

- In English, children made attained well above normal expectations for children of their age and made very good progress. This was particularly the case in their oral language development. Children demonstrated very good receptive and expressive language skills in their interactions with their peers and teachers. They listened carefully and responded well to questions about stories they were told. Their progress in writing was also very good as shown by their ability to write creatively for their age and ability. Children were able to read fluently, exhibiting very good mastery of literary understanding and comprehension. Different groups of students made similar progress.
- In mathematics, children attained well above normal expectations for their age. They showed a very good understanding of number, shape and space, and demonstrated their skills when applying their understanding to real life. For example, when shopping in the 'Kinder Mall', they purchased different fruits and vegetables and discussed their scientific properties with others. Children had developed very good mathematical language and were able to use it to describe the properties of different shapes. They could apply elementary critical thinking to their work. For example, they could sequence shapes and colours and could construct complex patterns and sequences of objects to levels well above the curriculum expectation for their age. Progress was similar for different groups.
- In science, as in English and mathematics, children attained well above expectations and made very good progress. They investigated a range of scientific themes and topics appropriate to their age and ability. These learning experiences were very well structured and organised so they gained a very good understanding of the scientific concepts being taught. Children engaged very well in lessons, consolidating their learning through the extension activities that were provided in the indoor and outdoor learning spaces. Many related these concepts to their prior knowledge and were able to develop new ideas as a result of these new learning experiences. All classrooms had space for scientific investigations, with some being used for the monitoring of plant and seed growth.

Primary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated skills and knowledge that were in line with curriculum expectations. This level of attainment was supported in internal test data. The progress students were making was similarly in line with curriculum and national expectations. The level of challenge provided in lessons was generally appropriate. Most students could relate their knowledge to their everyday lives, and most knew the power of belief in Allah through the Battle of Bader. They could recite short Surahs from The Holy Qur'an. Over the past two years, students' attainment has been in line with curriculum standards. Most continue to make the expected progress particularly in reciting the Holy Qur'an Surah's.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' listening and oral communication skills were developed to an acceptable standard. All students spoke Arabic, they expressed their understanding and ideas by using a variety of words linked to real life situations and appropriate to those they had learned. Most students could read the school curriculum texts after hearing it from the teacher and a few could read stories. All students could spell and copy text but opportunities for them to write freely were limited. Their grammar skills were acceptable and in line with the curriculum expectations across all classes.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students made acceptable progress in their listening and oral communications skills. They were engaged and responded accurately to questioning by teachers. They demonstrated acceptable progress in reading and understanding the ideas from a range of texts. In grammar and writing skills, students' made acceptable progress over time. Girls made better progress than boys.
- In English, internal assessment results indicated that the majority of the students, rather than most, attain levels above the curriculum standards. This was confirmed by results from external assessments. Students were articulate and used a rich vocabulary when communicating. The guided reading programme enhanced the reading skills of students, while the 'Big Write' programme honed their writing skills in different genres. Attainment had generally improved over time in most of the grades, particularly in lessons where the quality of teaching was stronger.
- In mathematics, students' attainment and progress was better in the upper end of the primary phase. Over a short space of time, newer students who joined the school mid-phase made accelerated progress in line with students who had been present from the beginning of the phase. Internal tests and external assessment confirmed good attainment and progress. Students were able to apply their learning in a range of practical exercises. For example, in Grade 2, students could identify combinations of notes and currencies to make up set prices. By Grade 4 they could accurately calculate the total cost of shopping using notes and coins within a fixed budget.

- In science, students' attainment and progress were acceptable. Students were given many practical opportunities to develop their understanding of scientific concepts. In Grade 3, for example, students were able to discover how light formed shadows and used that information to classify objects as transparent, translucent, or opaque. Students made acceptable progress, particularly in lessons in which they were able to think and behave like scientists. Some teachers inhibited progress for some groups of students by not providing sufficient opportunities for them to learn independently or practically.

### Middle

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In Islamic education, most students attained skills and knowledge in line with curriculum expectations. Most students knew the six rights of a Muslim and knew and understood the value of tolerance as demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Over time, internal test results indicated that most students attained at the expected curriculum levels. Most students made acceptable progress in linking the topic studied to the Hadith and Qur'an.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the skills and knowledge of most of the students were in line with general expectations. External testing was not available. Although most students demonstrated acceptable listening skills, their reading skills were below curriculum expectations. Progress of students' reading and writing skills were hindered by the late introduction of spelling and correction by teachers to lessons. The progress of students over time showed little improvement but girls continued to perform better than boys in this subject.
- In English, the majority of students attained levels above the curriculum standards. Good attainment and progress were confirmed by external assessments. Students used good language skills and appropriate vocabulary when speaking and writing. They analysed poems in grade 5 and by Grade 8 were able to use learning technologies to character sketch Shylock from the Merchant of Venice. Over the past two years, attainment had improved considerably in Grades 5 and 6 with particularly good progress being made by students in Grades 5 to 8 over the past year.
- In mathematics, the majority of students attained above the curriculum expectations. This was the case particularly in the lower grades of this phase and further enhanced by Grade 8. Attainment data, both internal and external, as well as students' performance in lessons and over time, showed the majority of students had well-developed knowledge, skills and understanding. They were able to successfully apply these skills to unfamiliar situations and other subject areas. For example, in Grade 5, students could identify trends in car sales using bar graphs, which they then usefully applied in science. In later grades students developed simple formulae to calculate the interior and exterior angles of various polygons and apply these in astronomy and design for manufacture. Opportunities for extended challenge were not always well used, and mental arithmetic was underdeveloped.

- Students demonstrated good attainment and progress in science, internal test results indicated that this had been maintained over two years. In lessons, students consistently acquired good understanding of concepts through hands-on activities and experimentation. In Grade 8, for example, students were able to use virtual laboratories to determine the impact of air resistance on free falling bodies. Students' progress was especially good in lessons in which they were able to work independently over prolonged periods of time.

	KG	Primary	Middle
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good

- In the KG, almost all children had started to develop their independent learning skills through activities such as individual reading and free writing. In a Primary English lesson, students critically reviewed newspaper articles and discussed how it could be improved.
- When given the opportunity, students worked collaboratively enhancing their own learning and supporting the learning of peers. For example, in Islamic education they used the technique 'freeze tableau' to develop their abilities to carry out role play. Most students, at all levels, were encouraged to communicate their learning within the class and did so with confidence.
- Students could make relevant links between curriculum areas to support their learning. For example, in mathematics students' understanding of ratios was enhanced by calculating actual distance between two points using a scaled map.
- The use of international test questions in science supported the development of higher order thinking skills. For older students, in most lessons, the use of learning technology provided additional challenge. In the KG, children used software to develop their computer coding and reasoning skills.

## 2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

	KG	Primary	Middle
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Most students exhibit positive and responsible attitudes towards their learning. They demonstrated confidence and independence in the way in which they engaged in assemblies. They responded very well to constructive feedback from their peers and their teachers.
- Students showed courtesy and respect to each other and those adults with whom they interacted. Negotiated class treaties between students and teachers and a rights and responsibilities charter set the tone in each class. Pupils behaved well in the classrooms, corridors and on school transport. They willingly adhered to the school rules. They were ably represented by a rigorously elected student council.

- Student staff relationships were mutually respectful. Students were observed supporting students with SEND to ensure that they were fully included in school life. Students were actively involved in a range of charitable activities supporting autism, breast-cancer awareness and providing relief for victims of the Nepal earthquake. They were encouraged to participate in the 'Eco Environmental Group' and 'Green Hope' conferences.
- Students of all ages demonstrated an informed understanding of what is meant by a safe and healthy lifestyle. Usually they made wise choices about healthy living. They sometimes participated in activities that promoted healthy lifestyles. Students were informed of the risks of the internet through the school's 'Common Sense Media Programme'.
- Attendance was good with most students arriving punctually to school and lessons throughout the day.

	KG	Primary	Middle
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Students had a secure knowledge and understanding of Islamic values and their influence on society. They were able to relate to wider world concepts, such as honesty and their impact on the modern society of Dubai and the UAE.
- Students were very respectfully to the UAE national Anthem and sang it confidently, students across the school understood and could talk confidently about the UAE heritage and cultures. Students participated in different activities such as the Flag and National Days in addition to Islamic celebrations.
- Students demonstrated a sound understanding of their own and other world cultures. They spoke with a good understanding of the importance of other cultures and participated enthusiastically in international celebrations in the school.

	KG	Primary	Middle
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Students were actively encouraged to participate in multiple, varied learning and leadership activities both inside and outside the school. These included various roles for students as 'Behaviour Ambassadors' and House Captains.
- The range and focus of external activities had a local, national and international perspective and included support for those with economic, educational, physical and social disadvantage. For example students supported workers at local labour camps, they had developed effective links to Al Noor Training Centre for Children with Special Educational Needs and had provided relief for victims of the earthquake in Nepal.

- Students had an outstanding work ethic. They participated enthusiastically in a variety of innovative activities including the DOT Project through [Innovation@NMS](#). They were active participants and hosts. For example they participated in Young Women's Leadership, breast cancer awareness, 'Think Pink', 'Live Green' and various inter-GEMS school events. They hosted the inter-school United Nations Day and were host to the next Dubai Makers Competition to encourage and develop enterprise and entrepreneurship.
- The student council promoted awareness and practice to support sustainable development and environmental conservation. The wide variety of displays across the school highlighted the priority placed by the school on the awareness of global and local issues.
- Through the role of environment ambassadors there was very good local recycling of litter and students were actively engaged in the tree planting programme. Through the 'Genius Hour' students successfully raised awareness of local and global issues for sustainable development and linked this to innovative solutions.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Good

- Most teachers demonstrated secure subject knowledge in the subjects they taught and a good understanding of how their students learned, this was particularly the case in KG and the middle phase. Teachers confidently found an appropriate pace for their learners. They understood different learning styles and planned appropriate activities accordingly. However, in English, for example, opportunities were missed for extending students' critical thinking, particularly for the most able students.
- In most subjects, teachers collaboratively planned their lessons well. In KG, teachers planned structured and purposeful activities in the activity centres, to provide for independent learning. Generally teachers used time and resources well to provide an interesting environment to meet students' diverse needs. However, in mathematics, time was sometimes not used well because teachers tried to include too much diverse activities in lessons, and in science teachers' planning was confused between differentiation by task or by outcome. Teachers' interaction with students in most subjects ensured that students were effectively engaged. Different questioning strategies in KG supported children in their reasoning processes. Opportunities provided in the free-flow area enabled them to engage in meaningful dialogue more informally. Questioning and dialogue across other grades ensured that students were well engaged, but in science, students were often asked closed questions and given little time to think or respond.
- In most subjects teachers used different and appropriate strategies to meet the needs of students. Lesson plans however were not consistently implemented. In the KG, varied teaching strategies help children to learn through independent tasks, group and paired work. However, the needs of the less able and the most able students were not routinely met because of the undifferentiated levels of challenge and support provided.
- In most subjects critical thinking and problem solving opportunities were well planned. In science, for example, the use of the 'Plus-Minus-Interest' approach promoted critical thinking, and in mathematics when lessons often began with a question of 'Why do we need to know this?'

- In the KG, provision was made for children to engage in independent learning in class through enquiry areas and 'writing table'. Sometimes challenging mathematics materials were available. Independent learning skills were demonstrated by most of the students in many subjects, as was their highly refined verbal reasoning skills.
- In Arabic as a first language, teachers had good knowledge of their subject. Teachers shared the lesson objectives with students, created a learning atmosphere, and gave each student appropriate time and support to meet their individual needs, but this was not consistent to promote better progress in lessons. Learning technologies were used by teachers and students, and dialogue with students generally engaged them in the lesson objectives, which led to acceptable attainment and progress by most students.
- In Arabic as an additional language, teachers demonstrated acceptable subject knowledge. However, some lacked the correct strategies to meet the needs of all groups of students. Questioning was often closed rather than open and challenging. Teachers rarely developed students' critical thinking and research skills, and did not routinely give students' opportunities for them to use learning technologies. Acceptable teaching led to acceptable achievement for students.

	KG	Primary	Middle
Assessment	Very good	Good	Good

- The school aligned its internal assessments well to the CBSE curriculum to provide valid and reliable evaluation of students' progress. In the KG, they used rubrics effectively to track the progress of children in lessons.
- The school worked on improving the benchmarking of its students' outcomes against external expectations, and had introduced the use of International Benchmarking Tests (IBT) and GL progress examinations. At the time of the inspection, the school was using CAT4 testing in Grades 4 to 8 to measure students' potential and skills and was also using BASE tests in the KG to identify students who were more able or gifted and talented.
- Effective systems were in place that enabled teachers and school leaders to track individual and groups of students' progress in all subjects over time. This was less effective for students with SEND whose progress in lessons was not always well planned for or tracked effectively.
- Teachers used the available assessment data at the end of each unit to make adequate changes to teaching, such as providing additional classes and focusing the lesson plans on identified areas of weakness.
- Teachers had good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses and provided most groups with appropriate challenge and support. Students' involvement in assessing their own and their peers' learning was inconsistent across the school and was more consistent in the KG. The quality of written feedback given to students was adequate, but lacked sufficient follow-up in some subjects.

#### 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle
<b>Curriculum design and implementation</b>	Good	Good	Good

- An internal mapping process as part of the ongoing review of the curriculum successfully modified it to meet the needs of most groups of students. In the KG, the curriculum was broadly based on the English Foundation Stage framework, while students in Grade 1 to 8 followed the CBSE curriculum. These bridged the gap between KG 2 and Grade1 to enable smooth transition.
- Adequate modifications were made to the curriculum to prepare students for international benching marking tests by focusing on the prime areas of requirement, such as the reading programme in English, the use of Apps like IXL and GIZMOS in mathematics and PMI strategies in science. However, there was a significant gap in content in Arabic as a first language from one grade to another.
- In grades 4 and 6, the prescribed allocation of time for teaching Arabic as a first language was not fully met. At least 20 minutes were lost by students as they moved classrooms between lessons.
- Regular meetings within and across phases ensured good transition from grade-to-grade and phase-to-phase over time. In the KG, the curriculum was effectively planned to ensure progression across all subjects. The learning units were designed in such a way that they could be differentiated to meet the needs of all groups of students enabling very good progress in their early learning and development.
- The PACT project in the school ensured that the academic curriculum was enhanced and provided students with a wide range of choices in sports, performing and creative arts, after the end of school. The Intervention programme, also after school provided support to students who needed help in improving their academic performance.
- Cross curricular links and real life connections were made when students acquired new knowledge. They were inconsistent in the primary and middle phases but stronger in the KG.
- The school had committed to and implemented the UAE social studies curriculum from Grade 1 to 8 in at least one period per week for each grade. In the KG, social studies was taught through the environmental sciences curriculum.

	KG	Primary	Middle
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	Good	Good	Good

- Differentiated learning in the form of different level worksheets was used in most of the classes. Although the activities differed for groups of students, the learning outcomes were the same. IEPs for SEND students were given to the teachers and support from shadow and assistant teachers was provided. Students with special educational needs and disabilities did not make the same good progress as their peers as IEPs were not always useful in helping teachers to identify barriers to their learning.
- In the KG, the curriculum offered a wide range of appropriate topics to motivate and meet the needs of most children. Opportunities for enterprise, innovation creativity, and social contribution were routinely provided. The 'Genius Hour' theme encouraged students to be innovative and creative. An interesting example was the designing, by some students, of a cable car to overcome the transport problem in Dubai.

- Community projects were conducted to build sensitivity for global issues, as in the case of older students working on the Syrian refugee crisis. UAE values and culture were fostered strongly, with the introduction of social studies in Grades 1 and 2 and integrating it in the other classes. In the KG, circle time and assemblies were used to broaden children’s understanding of UAE's culture and heritage.
- Arabic as an additional language was taught in KG 2 to prepare children for studying the subject in Grade 1.

### 5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students

	KG	Primary	Middle
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Child protection and safeguarding arrangements were clearly defined in a written policy. Teaching and support staff had received appropriate training and policies were available to staff and parents via the school intranet. An appropriate anti-bullying policy and additional information about the dangers of internet usage were understood. Students were counselled on how to deal with psychological abuse and bullying through social, media and messaging interaction.
- The school building provided a very safe, hygienic and secure environment for the school community. Effective policies and systems ensured that all students were safe at school and when traveling on school transport. Supervision of students was very effective at all times, including their safe arrival and departure. Staff were well briefed on health and safety matters with some having received training in fire-fighting techniques.
- The school clinic staff comprised of a full-time nurse and a visiting doctor. They complied with Dubai Health Authority specifications and requirements by maintaining medical records for every student. Regular vaccinations, BMI checks were carried out by the medical team. A daily clinic report for senior leaders, provides reasons for students visiting the clinic. Medical staff were vigilant in their care of students and recording events.
- The school premises, equipment and resources were very good and well suited to meeting the needs of students, including those with SEND. Premises were safe and secure with very good security checks in place. The school had put in place a comprehensive evacuation and lockdown plan. A systematic maintenance programme was overseen and implemented by the operations manager and his staff.
- The school promoted healthy living in coordinated ways, systematically woven through all aspects of school life. The canteen provided healthy meals and snacks consistent with the school's policy. Fitness programmes and advice from a dietician were also available to aid fitness and help maintain an appropriate ‘body-mass-index’. Very good measures were taken to ensure students’ protection from the sun, with shading provided and easy access to fresh drinking water.

	KG	Primary	Middle
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

- Student staff relationships were considerate and polite. There were effective systems in place such as the 'Happy to go home' certificate to encourage positive student achievement and behaviour.
- To promote excellent attendance, the school awarded certificates to all students who attended school without any absences for the whole of the academic year. The school promoted high expectations for behaviour through their 'Torchbearers' scheme which recognised classes who were most punctual to lessons.
- The specialist SEND team used a range of tests to accurately identify students' with SEND. The school made effective use of external aptitude tests to correctly identify gifted students and had developed an accelerated individual learning plan (ILP) for each of these students.
- The 'Wave' programme was used effectively to prioritise and monitor the quality of SEND provision, to individual students. This ensured that specialist staff were effectively deployed to provide support where most required. Students who had been identified as gifted were given access to a range of support and extension activities. However, the provision for talented students was at an early stage of development.
- The home room teacher worked alongside key staff to ensure breadth of care and provision for all students. The guidance counsellor had recently implemented a careers programme for older students, which included the opportunity for students' to research their future career aspirations.

### Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities	Acceptable
---	------------

- There was strength in the leadership of SEND found in the school but it was not robust enough to ensure students with SEND were making at least good progress in their academic development across all phases and in all subjects.
- Students with SEND were screened, assessed, monitored to ensure their needs were correctly identified and met, but their barriers to learning were not reflected in the individual education plans which were too heavily focused on academic attainment targets and not on removing the barriers to them learning as successfully as their peers.
- There were strong formal communications between the school and parents, these were further promoted through the shadow teacher role. The shadow teacher provided daily updates to parents on their child's learning activities and this log helped to inform the SEND team's tracking of progress and achievement of targets. However, information was not organised to reflect progress towards the student's targets which made tracking inaccurate.
- The curriculum and lesson plans had identified some modifications and adaptations for students with SEND, but these had not been fully developed or monitored for their effectiveness. The lack of appropriate IEP targets meant that teachers were not fully aware of how best to meet the needs of their students with SEND.

- Students with SEND made acceptable progress during lessons, but did not make good progress over time because of variations in the quality of support offered in some lessons. Their academic progress was more rapid in the KG as a result of the higher quality of curriculum provision found and better assessment methods used by teachers.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- Senior leaders, inspired by the principal, and supported by the governors, shared a compelling vision for creating an inclusive and innovative school where all students thrived and excelled. They were wholly committed to the UAE national and Emirate priorities and had clear plans in place for promoting an innovation culture in the school.
- Senior leaders and managers, and increasingly supported by middle leaders, provided highly competent leadership and direction to staff in their professional learning and development. School leaders also provided students with high quality and enriching learning experiences to promote their personal development and academic success.
- Effective and efficient communication systems supported leaders in the distribution of responsibilities and accountabilities. Morale in the school was very high. Staff were fully committed to professionally learning and developing to enable the school to reach its high aspirations.
- Senior and middle leaders had the necessary capacity and expertise to continue to improve the school, under the skilled direction of the principal. They collectively and individually understood the school improvement priorities and the actions required to continue to improve the school.
- Senior leaders and managers had implemented the necessary systems and structures to provide a good quality of education for most students, except those with SEND, and in Arabic as an additional language. They were effective in their monitoring of the quality of teaching in relation to students' achievements. In addition, they were fully involved in the continuous profession development of staff in order to ensure they were successful.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- Senior leaders and governors were systematic and rigorous in their self-evaluation of the performance of the school. They were able to evaluate accurately and this led to them producing accurate and well targeted school improvement plans, which were shared with all leaders and managers.
- Effective monitoring of the quality of teaching was effectively managed and coordinated by the senior leaders and phase leaders. Middle leaders had yet to engage fully in the monitoring of day-to-day teaching and learning. Though more were aware of their priorities for improvement, they were not always able to account as to whether improvement strategies were having a positive impact on students' day-to-day experiences.
- School improvement plans were comprehensive and well analysed as a result of an accurate self-evaluation. The school was committed to the UAE national priorities and these were firmly embedded in school improvement plans as well as day to day learning experiences of students.

- Improvements in the school have been accelerated since the arrival of the principal in April 2015, and much has been transformed in relation to the quality of curriculum, teaching and learning, and in leadership effectiveness. The school leaders have been highly strategic in their decisions about the priorities for providing a self-improving and self-sustainable system of school improvement.

#### Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- The school involved parents in some aspects of the education of their children. Their views were considered and used to shape the additional support provided to their child.
- Parents were involved in an effective two way communication with the school that made them active partners in their children's education. They were well informed about the academic and non-academic development of their children through the online portal 'My Learning' and through regular meetings with teachers and school leaders.
- Reporting on students' progress was regular and provided useful information about students' strengths, weaknesses, and ways to improve. The reports were made available online and in hard copies six times a year. Parents found the open house meetings with teachers useful especially in providing them with information about ways to support their children in their education.
- The school participated in several charity campaigns and constructed effective links with other GEMS CBSE schools. Students participated in initiatives such as the 'Model United Nations' and the 'Green Hope' conferences which had a good impact on their social and personal development.

#### Governance

Good

- A very strong and highly competent governing body with full representation of parents and other stakeholders ensured school leaders, managers and teachers were fully supported to establish a good school. Governors were appropriately used to support key leaders in their roles, and to bring about the benefits of the expertise of the wider corporate group to provide leaders and teachers with high quality professional development opportunities.
- Governors' impact was especially notable in the confidence shown and their support given to the principal and senior leaders in their drive to rapidly improve the quality of the curriculum, quality of teaching, and in building additional leadership capacity throughout the school.
- As regular visitors to the school, governors and corporate officers played a vital role in supporting the leaders in their aspirational drive to become an outstanding school. They were instrumental in key leadership decisions. However, governors had not ensured the school had met the time requirements for the teaching of Arabic as a first language, nor that native Arab students be taught separately from non-native Arabic students.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day-to-day management was effective and well ordered, as the school continued to expand rapidly to accommodate a growing population of new students. Routines, systems, and structures, particularly relating to safety and well-being, were effective and efficient.</li> <li>• The school was staffed appropriately with relatively low staff turnover. Staff were carefully recruited and selected, inducted, trained and mentored by senior leaders to ensure they were best supported to teach to the standards required. All staff benefit from highly personalised professional development, on-going mentoring and coaching from within the school or sourced from the corporate group.</li> <li>• Facilities, routines, and processes were effective which impacted positively on students' achievements and development. An example being the very well-resourced KG classrooms and specialist teaching facilities found in science and music.</li> <li>• A wide range of resources and facilities were available to staff and students to secure success. The investment made by the corporate group in furnishing the school to a high standard meant that staff and students could teach and learn in a modern and technologically developed setting. This contributed significantly to teaching being effective in most subjects and students making at least good progress.</li> </ul>	

## The views of the parents, teachers and students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form inspection judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
<b>Parents*</b> 	2015-2016	229
	2014-2015	0
<b>Teachers</b> 	22	
<b>Students</b> 	0	

\*The number of responses from parents is based on the number of families.

- Almost all of the 25 per cent of parents who responded to the survey were satisfied with the quality of education their children received. Most parents agreed that their children made good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Those parents who responded were satisfied with the range of subjects and extra-curricular activities their children received.
- Those parents who responded believed their children were safe on school premises and on buses.
- Most parents that responded felt that the school listened to them and acted on their reviews. Some parents expressed their concern about the quality of teaching in a variety of subjects including mathematics, science, Arabic and Islamic education.
- All teachers who responded thought that students behaved well, developed good awareness of other cultures, and were provided with opportunities to learn about community and environmental responsibility.
- Almost all teachers who responded believed the school was well-led.
- Almost all teachers said they were involved in the school's self-evaluation process and most said they were involved in the curriculum review process.
- Almost all teachers indicated that they received regular feedback on the quality of their work from their line managers.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, you should contact [inspection@khda.gov.ae](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)